

The Inner Mission.



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The inner mission

THE INNER MISSION.

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THE INNER MISSION.

FOUR ADDRESSES

BY

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J. B. PATON, M.A., D.D.

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1888.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE
MR. SAMUEL MORLEY,
WHOSE LIFE WAS AN EXAMPLE,
AND WHOSE FRIENDSHIP AN INSPIRATION,
TO MANY AS TO MYSELF,
IN THE WORK OF THE INNER MISSION.

PREFACE.

WHEN I saw Mr. Samuel Morley before the lingering illness which terminated in death, I requested him to permit me to inscribe this little volume to him, and he most willingly consented.

There was no one else from whom I could so fittingly ask the privilege. Through many years I had often conversed with him about "The Inner Mission of the Church," and, like many others, I had received from him counsel and support in attempting any work that fulfilled, though in smallest measure, the purport of that Mission.

The phrase "Inner Mission," with which

I became acquainted in Germany, was new and strange to him; but when I explained its meaning, as it had been used by Dr. Wichern in Germany, he approved and liked it.

It also struck me when first I heard it, and it growingly chimes upon my inner ear of sense as a very happy phrase. In contrast to the foreign or "outer" mission of the Church, it sets forth its mission *within* the land in which it is planted, bringing into vivid relief and definite vision the immediate and practical work of the Church among all the people of that land. And its object is, that the country it thus occupies, shall become, not nominally but in reality, a part of Christendom in which the institutions and usages of society, and the condition of the people, harmonise with the righteous will of God. It further suggests a combi-

nation of Christian agencies directed to this end,—a union of Christian Churches, that consciously and with definite aim seek to fulfil the command and inspiration of their faith ; and by union, encourage and sustain each other in their great undertaking.

It will be seen therefore, that the phrase “Inner Mission,” is taken by me, in a general sense, to denote the social redemptive work of the Church of Christ, by the diffusion of those regenerative influences which the Living Spirit of Christ, in His grace and truth, imparts to it for the well-being of society ;—and in a more specific sense to denote a union of Christian Churches, the object of which is, to give consistency, higher intelligence, and mightier effect, to their separate and conjoint labours for the good of the people.

This Inner Mission of the Church roots

itself in the evangelic faith of the Church, and, though it may seem formally distinct from, is vitally associated with, the preaching of the gospel of salvation to individual men. It will make, as I have said in the following pages, the "good news" of God's forgiving and healing love to sinful men, intelligible, and credible, and real to them, as it shows the love of those whom He has so richly and wondrously blessed, spending itself, in ways like God's own, though infinitely lower, in undoing wrong, assuaging sorrow, and restoring "Peace and goodwill among men." And assuredly it is God's own redeeming love poured into the hearts of His servants—touched as it is with fervent sympathy, and instinct with righteous wisdom that alone will inspire and rightly guide men in the "service of humanity."

The true key-note of the "Inner Mission

of the Church " accordingly was, it seems to me, sounded in a circular issued by a committee appointed by the Conference held in Nottingham, at which the first paper now published in this work was read. That circular contains these words: "It is the sentiment of Christian obedience and love that alone can give unity and living energy to this Catholic movement to promote, in the name of Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God, the well-being of the people. The committee accordingly beg to remind you, what were the convictions that animated the Conference, and which, as they give birth to this movement, must combine to be its inspiration; viz., that they who believe in Jesus Christ as their Divine Lord and Redeemer, acknowledge the absolute authority of His law as revealed in His example and precepts, and are constrained by His measureless love to the

devotion of obedience to Him. Further, that the Lord Jesus Christ summons His believers to be the witnesses of His redeeming truth and love, by their example and their willing sacrifice to promote the good of men ; and that they should unite to confess the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men from every form of evil, and to prove that He is such, by working under His leadership, for the removal of every evil from society, so that all men may be blessed in Him, and ‘confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.’

“These sentiments have always been, and are now professed by the universal Church of Christ. The object of the Inner Mission, wherever it is formed, will be to give clearer utterance and manifestation to these sentiments, and to make them operative in revealing, at once, the true nature of the Chris-

tian religion by its regenerative influence in society, and the true unity of Christian believers, who, however they differ, are ONE in their obedience to Christ and their service to men."

J. B. PATON.

CONGREGATIONAL INSTITUTE,

NOTTINGHAM,

October, 1887.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE INNER MISSION OF GERMANY AND ITS LESSONS TO US	I
THE INNER MISSION OF THE CHURCH . . .	45
THE PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE IN RELATION TO THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL . . .	83
WOMAN'S GREAT WORK IN THE CHURCH . .	115

Christianity and the Well-being of the People.



THE
INNER MISSION OF GERMANY,
AND
ITS LESSONS TO US.

This Paper was read at a Conference held in Nottingham on Sept. 11th, 1873, to consider the practical relations of Christianity to the social wants and evils of our time.

The Circular summoning that Conference, and the Resolution which was unanimously adopted by the Conference, are printed at the close of the Paper.

J. B. PATON.



AT the close of the war of deliverance, viz. in the years 1814 and 1815, the fearful miseries of the people in Germany, after the long years of incessant turmoil and bloodshed which the Napoleonic wars had caused, touched the heart of some devoted German Christians, chiefly women; and in simple fashion a few orphan homes were established for children, famished and lost, whose parents had been slain in these wars. This century is distinguished among all the Christian centuries for its munificent exhibitions of Christian charity in all lands and among all Churches. So in Germany also, these few individual efforts, peering like first faint spring flowers from the barren wastes of a long winter of wars, were the forerunners of larger and more nobly organized societies and

institutions for the relief of the sorrows and wants of the people. These were, chiefly, associations for the care of the poor and the nursing of the sick, refuges for lost children. Conspicuous, however, among all other charitable institutions were the now famous Deaconess Institute at Kaiserwerth, and the "Rauhe Haus," near Hamburg, described so accurately and graphically in a book which I cannot too highly recommend to all interested in the subjects of this Conference—Dr. Fleming Stevenson's "Praying and Working."

Meanwhile, another spirit than that of Christian charity, especially during the years 1830-48, was abroad in Europe, and propagated itself swiftly and secretly till, in the great explosion of the Revolution in 1848, its rampant power and its destructive aims were alike suddenly disclosed—I mean the spirit of Communistic infidelity, which not only aimed at the abolition of religion, but at the dissolution of the moral bonds that hold society, even in its elemental form of the family life:

The manifestations of this evil power, and the proofs of its malign ascendancy over large masses of the people, especially in large towns, during the Revolution, startled all classes of the Christian world in the several German States, and awoke many to discern the appalling crisis of their time, and to rally with instant and resolute energy to fulfil their Christian duty to society. Here was an infidel propaganda with a social doctrine, which had infected multitudes, and had well-nigh shaken modern Christian society back into a barbaric chaos. The passionate longing for some new social state which had seized these multitudes had been caused by the sore crushing evils of the existing social state, for which they wildly and wrongfully sought redress. Now, then, must the Christian Church rise up from its sinful apathy, with its social doctrine and its saving health, to grapple with these evils which it had largely ignored, to redress them by its Divine teaching and life; and thus to save society

by healing its wounds, tempering its vital principles by the Christian spirit, and shedding over it the balm of a holy charity.

The vastness of the duty thus revealed, and the violence of the social convulsion which revealed it, urged together Christians of all the divers German States and of the two great Protestant confessions. These walls of division were thrown down, and at Wittenberg, in the September of 1848, the "Kirchentag," or "Church Assembly" of 500 representatives of all German Churches, met together for the first time, binding together these Churches of different confessions and kingdoms in the bond of a German Evangelic Union. And then the "Inner Mission" was established as the principal and practical object, and, therefore, as the cementing principle—the actual rivet, of their Union.

This mission was founded on occasion, and at the instance, of a memorable address by Dr. Wichern, picturing in powerful traits the state of the German people—how great

masses of the industrial population were fallen from, and alien to, the Church of Christ, —receiving no invigorating and purifying influences from the Church, which should be, as it professed, the People's Church, but organizing themselves more and more under the impulses of an anti-Christian spirit, often also immoral and dissolute ; how growing poverty was accompanied with resentful and revolutionary bitterness against the more favoured classes in society; and how through drunkenness and vice a deep swamp of pestilential corruption lay festering in the depths of society and breathing a dangerous miasma through all its ranks :—a picture not unlike what in our land, so happily conditioned in many respects, might be photographed from its present state. And the Inner Mission was founded, in the words of the first report, “that the Christian Church with all its resources, and through all means, might fill and quicken the whole life of the people in all circles and ranks ; that it should inspire

all social arrangements and institutions with the might of a Love energising heart and life, and that it should, through all its living members, labour to save the neglected and the poor." Further, every movement begun in this spirit and faith must not, it was said, stand separate and alone, but must be fostered and strengthened in its labours of love by a common sympathy; and all of them must be drawn together into manifest union with each other, as the ministries of one Divine Spirit—the Spirit of the redeeming love of Christ.

A Central Committee was at once formed of eminent Christian laymen—statesmen of Germany—and of leading ministers of the several Churches, to carry out the objects of the Inner Mission. They at once established their agencies in all parts of Germany; entered into correspondence with every institution that was carrying out in any department the objects of the Inner Mission, so as to bring them into open fellowship with each

other as ministries of Christ and His Church ; published a statesmanlike volume, showing the scope of their work, and stimulating all Christians to take a share in it ; and, further, gradually originated what fresh agencies it was in their province and in their power to establish. As the result, I learn by the last report that in connection with this Central Committee there stand now 23 Provincial Unions for the Inner Mission, whose action covers the different states and provinces of Protestant Germany ; 14 City Unions for the Inner Mission founded in the chief large towns of Germany ; 19 Pastoral Conferences or Associations of Ministers, which thus co-operate in the Inner Mission ; 131 Orphanages, Children's Refuges, and Idiot Asylums ; 5 Institutions for the training of men for different spheres of the Inner Mission ; 14 Deaconesses' Institutions ; 22 Children's Hospitals and Unions for the care of the sick and the poor ; 5 Homes for young women ; 7 Magdalen Asylums ; 17 Societies for the care

of Prisoners, especially on leaving prison ;
176 Young Men's and Workmen's Societies ;
15 Bible, Tract, and Colportage Societies, 2
Building and Art Societies, 1 Association of
Teachers, and 3 Societies for the Scattered
German Population in Europe and America,
etc.

Now, that we may fully comprehend the spirit and scope of the Inner Mission, I must adopt the great divisions of its work mapped out by Dr. Wichern in the "Memorial Volume," issued by the Central Committee, which may be said to give in one masterly and organized form the whole scheme and living forces of this mission ; and which by its profound, calm, resistless earnestness evoked the spirit of the Inner Mission and established its operations in all parts of Germany. He surveys the need of German Christendom, *i.e.* of the Christian nation, to whose well-being as such the Christian Church was pledged, under four aspects : 1. That which is properly civil, belonging to the sphere

of the State. 2. That which is properly spiritual, belonging, therefore, immediately and supremely to the Church. 3. That which relates to public morality. 4. That which belongs to the divers and manifold social relations of life. In each of these spheres, answering to the whole need of the nation, the Inner Mission of the Church is called to labour—nothing being foreign to it which promotes in any way the true well-being of the people.

Under the first division, whilst it takes no side in purely political controversy, yet as against the principles of Communism, sapping the foundation of civil society, it maintains the authority of Law as the foundation of all social order, and declares the eternal sanctity of *marriage* and of individual rights and responsibilities as symbolised by *personal property*—which are the two chief pillars of the social fabric. Under this division, however, the Inner Mission mixes in the public affairs of the State chiefly with respect to the

criminal population. The prisons of the State are its chosen field of labour, for its mission is to reform and save the criminal. Its desire and its purpose are, that the entire official staff of each prison should be men inspired by a Redeemer's love, and having grace from Him to awaken in the callous, icy heart of the criminal the longing and a prayer after a better life. "I was in prison, and ye visited me," Wichern says, is a forgotten text. Christ, in the person of these guilty, hardened sinners, has waited in vain for the coming of His own redeemed servants! Then, when the prisoners leave prison—strange that the emissaries of the devil's church should be there with open arms to welcome, nay, to force them back to vice and infamy, but no messenger of Christ's Church should be there to lead them, if they would, into new paths of virtue and peace! The solicitous care of prisoners in the prison, and their rescue and protection after leaving prison, is thus the labour of the Inner Mission. And here

Wichern emphasizes with a strong accent, what recurs again and again in his volume, that this noble work of Saving Love is not a matter of idle fantastical sentiment, a mere utopian dream of enthusiasm. It must be intensely real, and lay a firm hold on the hard realities with which it has to deal. It is a sober, practical business, to be fulfilled with patient wisdom and rigorously disciplined agency. Hence he insists that men, devoting themselves to such prison service and all other practical work of the Inner Mission as their life calling, should be men selected, proved, and trained for their arduous vocation ; and hence, likewise, you will recollect—we learnt that the Inner Mission has established five training institutions for such men, and fourteen deaconesses' institutions.

The department of work properly spiritual, and belonging therefore immediately to the sphere of the Church, is one with which happily we are better acquainted in this country : and our Christian activity, especi-

ally in large towns, has saved England from the religious destitution and widespread godlessness that are so sadly apparent in German cities. Wichern first insists upon the formation of Bible Societies in order that the Word of God may be put everywhere into the hands of the people, and the institution of house meetings for the reading and simple explanation of that Word; then of book societies, laying hold of shops and all other available means for the sale and diffusion of good popular books and journals, which have in them the glow of a bright and healthy Christian spirit, while along with these he urges the institution in every locality of small lending libraries. He does not conceal the difficulties that beset the production of such literature, especially of such journals, but he believes that earnest Christian love is more than able, when roused and fixed to the undertaking, to meet these difficulties. The passion of doing good in Christ's name has ever shown itself competent for its sublime task! Then follows, in

his list, colportage—the colporteur being a man of sense as well as of zeal, able therefore, not only to commend and sell his books, but also to speak the truth of God's Word as he found entrance for it, and to awaken interest, not only in the Christian books he sells, but in the doctrine and life they portray. After the colporteur, he would send the travelling and street preacher—or Volks-prediger—the herald of the Church, announcing its good news, and leading the wanderers back to its fold. Together with these agencies, he desires the multiplication of the regular ministers of the Church in overcrowded districts.

All these latter agents must, of course, be wholly employed by the Inner Mission—men called out and sent forth on its service. But what must be the work of the innumerable members of the Church, who, as belonging to the believing priesthood of Christ, have to serve with Him in His saving work, as He would succour the people in their sorrow, and

bless them with all good? Largely, he thinks, this work will be found in the two next departments of the Inner Mission, where public morality and the social needs of the people are considered.

But ere he enters on these departments he asks the question: What time have Christian people for this Christian work, this redeeming work, this business of their Lord, who would save society, as He would save each soul, from all evil? Would I could give his answer! Suffice it to say, the love of God and man which has been kindled by, and is akin to, Christ's yearning compassion, will create, perforce, some time for its own most blessed need. If public business in the State commands freely the best services and the time of our ablest citizens, then too the special business of God's kingdom with which, indeed, the welfare of the State and interests of humanity—grander than those of the State—are bound up, may find even a nobler willingness. He asks women to let

this ministry of Christ be their own. And men of business, men of wealth, who have realized a competent fortune, he asks to devote their whole time and experience, and their energies which have been trained in their worldly business, to this Divine business of their Lord ; letting the ripe Sabbath years of their life be thus consecrated to the god-like work of blessing, with the good it needs, a suffering and sinning world.

In the department of public morality, Dr. Wichern centres the work of the Inner Mission on three points—prostitution, corrupt popular literature, and drunkenness. The protection of young women, their rescue from vice, and the punishment of vice ; the exposure and combating, by every means, of corrupt literature, the supply and propagation of good literature in its place ; and the action of temperance societies, either teetotal or not, are the duties involved in this sphere of the Inner Mission.

And now Dr. Wichern enters on the large

and critical questions that agitate society, which arise out of our vast social evils, widening and deepening in the midst of even prosperous communities, and which can only be solved by the practical, because wise and patient, love of the Christian Church. These questions relate to the three great ordinances of the family, of property, and of labour. The stability, purity, and honour of the Family life lie at the root of all social welfare. Hence to restore these everywhere among the people is a first work of the Inner Mission. Here Communism and Christianity come into direct conflict. To track the causes that give such a power to Communism in our day must be the study of Christian men; for to encounter that foe we must know the springs of its strength. Communism also assails the other ordinances of Property and Labour, annulling the one, and degrading the other to a mechanical uniformity, whilst it deprives the labourer of the reward that spurs and cheers him. But its strange and delusive

potency has arisen only from the sins of that society which it would destroy. And now Christian men and women have both to assuage the evils which these sins have induced, and to assail the sins from which they spring. Communism would destroy society ; it is given to Christianity to save it. Accordingly, Wichern reviews what has been done, and what may be done, to reform the lawless and depraved family life ; to save neglected and lost children ; to alleviate the wants of the poor, and aid their efforts after independence ; to nurse the sick ; to consecrate the use of property, and to heal the feud between the possessing and non-possessing classes of society ; to bring the mass of the working classes again under the healthy influence of Christ's doctrine of righteousness and love.

Here he surveys what has been done in other lands, signalling with honour efforts made in this country, and the services rendered to Roman Catholic countries by the modern societies of Vincent de Paul and of

St. Regis ; and then, with a wise statesmanship, considers and propounds what must be done for Germany by the Inner Mission. I wish I had time to quote his words on the care of the poor. In England, more than in any other country, is the curse of pauperism felt. There is terrible poverty in other countries ; but the suction of that great *maelström* which drags down our respectable poor from the consciousness of a virtuous self-reliance ; and the hereditary taint which propagates itself, vitiating and degrading a whole class of the community known as the pauper class, exist nowhere as in England. Both the great forces now at work to relieve our poor, both State alms and the ordinary bounties of charity, to a large extent foster the vice of pauperism, and so multiply the class and aggravate the evils which they would relieve. Here is one vast social problem which only the Christian Church, allying all willing agencies with itself, can effectually solve. But to do it, the Church, in its earnest living

members, must study the problem under the complex conditions engendered in modern English society, and then labour right arduously and patiently for its removal ; for, as Wichern says, " In all cases it is by the Inner Mission of the Church that the Christianly moral principles, which alone can work with an educating influence among the people in the treatment of the poor, can be made effective ; and there only in the form, and by the means, of a personal relationship and intercourse, begotten of love, between the voluntary friends and helpers of the poor, and the poor themselves ; and by uniting together in a vital and necessary connection, all outward and inward, material and moral, intellectual and spiritual, help—so that the former of these, the outward and material, shall lead to and prepare for the latter ; and the latter, the inward and spiritual, shall be recognised and felt to be the true power that enables men to acquire and rightly use the former."

Now how does Wichern contemplate the

accomplishment of so manifold and great a work? How is the Inner Mission actually carried out? True, the scheme may, like all right ideals, shine above us as something toward which we must always aspire and strive. But his method is wise, as his ideal is right; and where his method is adopted, gradually the ideal will become real. I omit all references to country districts or to the larger operations of the Inner Mission in provinces and kingdoms. I confine myself to the Inner Mission in towns like our own. Here then he desires a union of earnest, wise, faithful, Christian men and women, who understand the object and the scope of the Inner Mission as it concerns the well-being of the people. This union should be the active organizing body, and form "the direction" of the Inner Mission in the town. In this union he would have representatives of every institution and society in the town that has a distinctly Christian spirit, and has an evangelistic or philanthropic aim: not that these

societies or institutions should in any way be interfered with or merged into a greater organization, but that they may work in concert, be acquainted with each other's work, assist each other, and above all, manifest in such an alliance the unity of the Christian spirit that animates them all, so that the world may learn thus impressively how Christ Himself is the inspiring Spirit of their multifarious ministries of love. Along with such representatives of existing societies, others must be added who shall be representatives of the several district or denominational Churches, which, divided as they may be locally, or in minor points of creed, have one faith—in the redemption of Christ ; one spirit—of His redeeming love ; and one work—in the redemption of humanity from all evil.

The object of the Inner Mission, thus constituted, is fourfold. 1. To inform all the Evangelic Churches of Christ with respect to their great social and philanthropic duty in our time ; to awaken their sympathies in such

work, that thus they may show Christ's redemption to suffering and sin-worn men, in forms palpable to their grossest sense, and touching them with some deeper understanding of our Redeemer's unutterable love for them in the deepest evils of the soul, because they have felt the relief it brings in the outward miseries of life. 2. To associate with itself, and so to bring into harmonious and helpful co-operation, every existing agency—now working in broken and separated fashion; if necessary, to quicken or sustain these agencies; to take counsel and action with the civil officers of the town in matters belonging to their department, which relate to public health, the well-being of the poor, the charge of the neglected youth, and of the fallen and criminal members of society. 3. To study carefully and comprehensively the whole of the existing social and moral condition of the town; to note whatever special evils and wants appeal for Christian action; by "flying leaves" to make the Christian

Churches otherwise usually absorbed in their local and separate affairs, acquainted with these facts ; to stimulate and direct the action of Christian men and women, and of Christian Churches, to separate or concerted action in respect of them ; and then to make regular reports to the whole of the Christian Church which they represent, of the needs that have been thus portrayed and of the answering Christian ministries that may have striven to meet them. 4. To initiate and continue practical measures that require united action ; to begin special agencies, as they may be needed, which may be handed over to the charge of special societies, united, however, in the bond of the Inner Mission ; or to establish institutions and conduct agencies on its own responsibility, in the name of 'the Church of Christ and its Inner Mission.' Dr. Wichern also recommends that, if possible, the larger central body which represents and conducts the Inner Mission should be subdivided into district divisions, so as more

effectually to superintend certain kinds of service that need close local attention, such as the conduct of poor-relief, and the nursing of the sick poor.

I have now sketched the history, the aims, and the method of the Inner Mission in Germany. Let me, in a few concluding words, ask its lesson for us in England! rather, I say, for Nottingham! for whilst its lessons avail for all England, I know no town that is so happily circumstanced as Nottingham for taking the lessons of the Inner Mission and putting them into practice. If we cannot do it here, I should despair of its being done elsewhere. To know these lessons, let me point out the great principles that underlie the Inner Mission and give it at once form and life. These principles are its lessons. Can we apply and embody these in our town? *First*, and most emphatically, that Christianity is a social religion—in a different sense from that often put upon these words. It is a religion for society. It is a

religion which saves society as well as individual man, which brings health—the stability, purity, freedom, and peace, of a healthy well-being—to the community which it vitalises and rules with its spirit. Accordingly we believe that every institution of society, every association of men in all classes of the people, every relationship of life, should be founded on a Christian idea and hallowed by a Christian spirit ; and, further, that the true Church of Christ has to assert and carry out the redemptive work of Christ in society, and that its grand, if not its supreme, object, is to build up a true Christian nation, the whole atmosphere of whose varied life, and the widespread roots of whose social and public institutions, shall be distinctively Christian ; so that these gracious words, “ Christendom ” and “ Christian nation,” expressive of the spheres within which the Church of Christ exerts its influence, may have a definite, actual, and glorious meaning.

(2) That all personal or aggregate efforts

inspired by Christian love should somehow or other be united publicly in the name of Christ, and have some means of communicating reciprocal knowledge and help ; that they should thus exhibit, in their union and their open confession of Christ, the reality and magnitude of the practical and saving work now done in society by our Lord and Redeemer through His members, in order that men may know Him, and, as of old, honour Him and believe on Him for His work's sake. (3) That the Church, so far as it is the communion of believing men and women, has to reveal to the world Christ's compassion for the people. It is the treasury of His saving grace for man. Wherever there is sickness, poverty, sorrow, temptation, vice, there is its mission to make known Christ, not only by words, but by deeds of saving love—to heal, to comfort, to protect, to rescue, to bless, in His name. Men oppressed by the actual evils of life can hardly appreciate the tidings of a salvation which does not

relieve from them ; but let these be encountered and relieved by the great love of Christ in His Church, and then with strange longing, and with an answering love, they may follow Him who has thus blessed them, to learn the richer blessings of His greater salvation. At the present day, especially, we must show to men a real Christianity ; redemption in its broadest, fullest, and most blessed sense ; redemption from the evils that actually oppress humanity. (4) That the universal priesthood of believers taught by all Protestant Churches is a glorious truth that has yet to be fully and practically accepted and carried out. All must join in the ministries of Christ's saving love for mankind. But multitudes have not the gift of grace for teaching or for direct spiritual work. Indeed, this usually implies an eminency in grace which we can hardly expect in all. But in this blessed social practical ministry to want and sorrow, all—the youngest, the weakest, the most ignorant—can join. The cup of cold water—any

Christian hand can give. To soothe a fevered brow for Christ's own sake is impossible to no Christian woman. Here is a field for all. This is the world's need! And it is the Church's need—that all her members may engage in service they can render for Christ, thus fulfilling their own duty and receiving the rich rewards of His promise. And, *lastly*, that the social work of the Church must be done systematically and under the guidance of the highest wisdom of the Church. All must join it. But the leaders of the Church must unite in studying the great problem with which they deal, so that all may work wisely to secure the ends sought, without marring each other's work or idly beating the air. Union, organization, and wise spiritual statesmanship, are necessary here.

Now, may I venture to ask, nay, to plead, that such a work as the Inner Mission may be established in our town. I do not pronounce the jeremiad over modern society that some of our public writers are now fond

of wailing forth. But, amid great material prosperity, there are deep cankers in our social estate which may work the corruption of death, if, in Christ's name, we do not bring to them His healing. In our town I might name many such social evils, but I only mention three, which have recently been brought under public notice :—1. Mr. Manning last winter summoned a meeting of ministers to learn the alarm with which, in his office as mayor, he had viewed the spreading pest of a corrupt licentious literature among the youth of the town. 2. Again, we were told last winter that thousands of young females came to Nottingham, tempted by the great demand for female labour, who are without the sheltering care of a home. 3. Nottingham is a most prosperous town, yet we see how the vice of pauperism clings to us and deepens among us. Now these and such like general facts concerning our moral and social condition do not come under the cognisance of an individual or district Church. It cannot deal with

them. They can be dealt with only by all the Churches combined. Having one faith, and one Spirit, and one Lord, they have here one work in the town. May we not then have such a Union in this town, containing representatives of all existing Christian charities and societies, working for social ends, and representatives of all Churches having faith in Christ's redemption, that shall do these things: (1) collate and study all the facts bearing on the physical, moral, and social condition of the town, and show the practical relation and duty of the Christian Church with respect to them; (2) incite and direct to needful efforts in view of these facts, so as to relieve distress, save from vice, and regulate and inspire all social institutions with Christian principles; (3) take counsel, and co-operate, with our civil agencies towards the highest well-being of the people; (4) initiate and conduct new agencies that may be required to meet any special and urgent wants of the town; (5) exhibit to the people of this town

the unity of all who love Christ—in their love for men—that they may know that we are one in Him, and that He is the “Anointed” of God for a world’s redemption.

COPY OF RESOLUTION ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CONFERENCE.

“That a Union be formed in the town, consisting of the representatives of all existing Christian charities and Christian societies working for social ends, and of the representatives of the Church of Christ in this town. Its object shall be,—first, to strengthen by such union these several Christian societies and charities, to make them acquainted with each other’s work, and to manifest the unity of the Christian spirit that inspires them all; secondly, to collate and study facts connected with the physical, moral, and social condition of the town, and to impress on the public mind the practical relation and duty of the Christian Church with respect to these facts; thirdly, to take counsel and action with the civil agencies of the town on matters with which they are connected, and which affect the

social well-being of the people ; fourthly, to incite and direct individual and Church labours, so as to relieve distress and save from vice, and to inspire and regulate all social institutions with a Christian spirit ; fifthly, where existing agencies and individual or separate Church action do not meet any special and urgent wants of the town, to institute and conduct such agencies as shall ; and sixthly and lastly, to exhibit by such combined action for the well-being of the people the reality of Christian unity, and the social redemption that is effected by Christian love."

PROGRAMME AND CIRCULAR CONVENING
THE CONFERENCE.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE WELL-BEING OF THE
PEOPLE.

A Public Conference will be held in the Lecture Hall of the Mechanics' Institution, on Thursday, 11th inst., Morning, 10 a.m., and Evening, 6.30 p.m., to consider the practical relations of Christianity to the social wants and evils of our time.

Papers will be read on the following subjects ; and discussion, with prayer, will follow the reading of each paper :—

(1) Christianity and the higher Education of the People. By JAMES STUART, Esq., Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge.

(2) Our Neglected and Criminal Children : their claims on the Christian Church. By Rev. T. BOWMAN STEPHENSON, B.A., of the Children's Home, Bonner Road, London ;

and by T. J. BARNARDO, M.D., Home for Working and Destitute Lads, Stepney Causeway, London.

In connection with this subject, Orphan Asylums, and other means of rescuing our Pauper Classes, will come under consideration.

(3) The Nursing of the Sick: especially of the Sick Poor in our large towns. By Miss MERRYWEATHER, of Liverpool.

(4) The Care of Prisoners: especially of *female* prisoners discharged from prison. By Miss WILSON, of Leeds.

(5) How to Improve the Public-house. By Mrs. J. HIND SMITH, the founder of the "British Workman" Public-houses.

(6) Our Workhouse Children. By Miss MATHEWS, of Birmingham.

(7) The "Inner Mission" of Germany, and its lessons for England. By the Rev. J. B. PATON, M.A.

In addition, it is hoped that the questions of "Pauperism," "The Agricultural Poor," "The Elberfeld System of aiding the Poor," as also of "Workhouse Life," etc., may be considered at the Conference.

It becomes Christian men and women to study the grave social wants and evils of our time, and to labour unitedly and earnestly for their alleviation and entire removal.

(1) Because the true principles, that can alone reform, heal, and elevate society, are the principles of God's kingdom, revealed in Christianity, which are Righteousness and Love. Christianity is the true Social Science.

(2) Because the energies and sympathies engendered of living faith in Christ alone suffice to grapple with these evils,—to encounter and share the miseries which they inflict, and to pierce with searching and healing touch to the roots from which they spring.

(3) Because every Christian is pledged by his own redemption to be a fellow-worker with Christ and his brethren in the holy work of rescuing his fellow-men and society from every form of evil.

The Christian Church, so far as it is a communion of Christian men and women, receives "gifts of Christ's grace" for the solace of human sorrows, and the lessening of human sin. The leaves of the tree of life, planted in the Church, are for the healing of the nations. We are responsible as the stewards of these Divine and healing gifts, for their wisest and most effective administration.

The evidences by which Christ, when on earth, proved to men His Divine mission, and revealed to them, as they were able to receive it, His profounder compassion for them in their deeper spiritual needs, and His richer gifts of spiritual healing and life, were His beneficent wonders—works of sympathy and

mercy to the needy and the outcast. It is also by such evidences that the Christian Church, which is now His "living body" on earth, must still make men know the fulness of His compassion for them, and lead them to understand and realize the fulness of His saving health, which crowns body and spirit alike with the "Eternal Life."

In our time, especially among the working classes, there is a widespread impression that Christianity has no reality in it, that it deals only with "the other" world, and not with this; or, that, at any rate, it brings no palpable blessing to them in this world. This is, we believe, a great mistake. There is scarcely any good thing in modern society but springs from a Christian root. The multitudinous agencies that labour especially for the good of the poorer classes, are inspired chiefly, even if not confessedly—by Christian faith. Yet there may have been much in the conduct of Christian people to give rise to this injurious conception of

Christianity. Christian preaching and Christian life may have been sundered too much from the practical social necessities of the Time. And what has been done from Christian faith has not been known to spring from that source. If so, we must now endeavour to represent more faithfully the religion of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and to show that Christianity alone is the true Secularism—having richest blessings for the life that now is. We must show that the mighty inspirations which come into the soul of man from faith in the Eternal world, which is “Now” as well as “Hereafter,” all quicken and constrain him “to do good and to communicate” in this world—in the living society of men of which he is a member.

The social and philanthropic labours in which Christian men and women must necessarily engage, afford the best field for manifesting the true unity of all Christians who have, with whatever differences of opinions,

this spirit of their Master—the enthusiasm of humanity, the desire to do good, and to lessen the miseries of their fellow-men ; and who merge their differences of opinion in the face of the darkening evils we would combat, and in the memory of that great Redeeming Love that saves us—and sends us, laden with saving blessings, to the needy that suffer and are lost.

Led by these sacred considerations, we have been glad to assist in arranging for a Conference of Christian men and women, to be held (according to the programme) in the Lecture Hall of the Mechanics' Institution on Thursday, the 11th instant, in the Morning at 10 a.m., and in the Evening at 6.30 p.m. And we cordially invite such persons, who share to any extent these convictions, in the town and neighbourhood, to be present and take part in the deliberations of that day. We hope that these deliberations will prepare for, and lead to, more zealous philanthropic labours for the highest well-

being,—physical and moral, social and spiritual,—of the Community.

We are grateful that several well-known Christian workers, in different parts of the country, who have been honoured to inaugurate different kinds of Christian philanthropic labours, and who have gained rich experience therein, are willing to assist our deliberations.

We acknowledge that the study of complicated social problems in the light of Christianity needs to be conducted with wise and earnest thoughtfulness; that our “ministry of good” is a Divine service which must tax our best powers of thought, as well as our zeal and endurance; in order not only that our good may not be evil spoken of, but that it may be unattended with evil—ignorantly caused, and that it may accomplish the ends that are sought, most effectively and happily. In our Conference, accordingly, we must look to Him who has given us the Spirit of power, of love, and

of a sound mind ; and who giveth liberally the wisdom from above, which is “full of mercy, and of good fruits : without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

FRANCIS MORSE.
J. B. PATON.

Nottingham, Sept. 3, 1873.

THE INNER MISSION OF THE CHURCH.



AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CONGREGATIONAL
INSTITUTE, NOTTINGHAM,

ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE
MAJORITY OF THE INSTITUTE.

THE INNER MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

By the "Inner Mission" of the Church I mean its mission in a so-called Christian land, *i.e.* a country like our own, in which the Church of Christ has been effectively established, and among whose people Christian truth has been widely diffused, and is generally accepted. I use this term, therefore, in contrast to the foreign or external mission of the Church, when she goes to assail heathen idolatry, and to unveil amid the darkness in which it has imprisoned the nations of the earth, "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God." The Inner Mission of the Church in England, accordingly would include all the prayer and labour of her great redemp-

tive ministry, in order that in this land of ours the kingdom of God may fully come,—that His will may be done here as it is done in heaven.

Now I must distinguish these two conceptions of “the Church” and “the Kingdom,” and the doctrine or teaching of Scripture with regard to each of them respectively ; for they have been confounded together, and great mischief has resulted from the confusion. The three synoptic Gospels set forth prominently the doctrine of the Kingdom, named by Mark and Luke the kingdom of God, and by Matthew the kingdom of heaven. They announce its laws and its beatitudes ; they describe the manner and conditions of its gradual growth ; they reveal the Divine, healing, and regenerative powers, which are manifest in its growth, and will insure its final triumph. And they thrill and glow with the good tidings of great joy, that the kingdom of heaven has actually come down to this world, in “the brightness of the coming” of

its true Lord and Redeemer, and that it will extend and prevail against all obstruction, till great voices in heaven exclaim, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." The doctrine of the kingdom accordingly sets before us in its entirety, so far as this world is concerned, the object and result of our Lord's incarnation and redeeming work. The doctrine of the Church, on the other hand, shows us the institution and agency which He has created, and which He uses in order to accomplish this sublime purpose—and this doctrine fills the epistles of His Apostles.

The Church consists of men and women who, conscious of the redemption from the enthralling power and the guilt of sin which has been given to them by the marvellous grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ, surrender themselves, in the obedience of faith, to Him who has bought them with His own blood, in order to fulfil all His blessed will and work in the world ;—who are touched

and quickened in the inmost fibres of their being by the redeeming Spirit of their Lord ; —and who by this one Divine Spirit, which animates them all, and by the inspiring consciousness of the transcendent work which they have to carry on together for the world around them, are drawn and bound together in a unity of fellowship which is eternal.

Two figures are used in the Epistles to portray this sacred living unity of the Church, and its redemptive function in the world. (1) "It is a holy temple," says the apostle, "in which we are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." And from this temple; as from the temple of old, the light and truth of God shine forth to illumine and bless the whole world. (2) There is that wondrous figure which is repeated so often in the Epistles, and which sets forth the Church of Christ in the exactest form in which human thought can conceive, or human speech can reveal it. The Church of Christ is His body—the immortal

body of Christ on earth—the members of which live by His Spirit, partake thus in common of one life which is His, and live in that Body to reveal the mind and do the will of Him whose body they form. Christ thus lives ever in His Church, as of old in His mortal body, and His work in it now, as of old, is by the revelation of the righteousness and love of God, and by His ministries of mercy to bring the kingdom of heaven down to earth.

The Church then is not the kingdom. It lives, created and inspired by the redeeming Spirit of Christ, to form the kingdom of God, and to extend it ever more and more widely upon earth: and this is done, as our Lord has taught us in His prayer, just in the measure in which, in the hearts of individual men, and in the social relationships of men,—the home, friendship, business, the State—the will of God is done here on earth as it is done in heaven.

Now three great evils have arisen, as it

seems to me, from the confusion of the conceptions of the Church and the kingdom: *First*, the parables which set forth the gradual diffusion of Divine righteousness and love in the world,—the commixture and conflict in the world of these elements of good with the evil, and their final separation in the Day of Judgment, have been perversely taken to represent the necessary and proper state of the Church on earth. And hence a doctrine of the Church has prevailed which has fashioned the entire constitution and administrative procedure of the Roman and Greek Churches, and which has sadly depraved and weakened many of the Protestant Churches, that have followed Augustine in his interpretation of the parables. I allow that the doctrine of the Church presented in the Epistles is the ideal Church, which must, like every ideal in this world, shine ever above us as not yet fully attained. But it furnishes the law according to which the Churches must ever organize and discipline themselves, and the aim after

which they must sedulously strive. On the contrary, however, the parables show us the world, and the kingdom of heaven struggling to realize itself there through the patient, mighty redemptive forces which Christ, in His true Church, pours into it ;—the world therefore, with its sin and wildering sorrows on the one hand, and its hungering need and desire on the other, groaning for deliverance ; and amid all, the kingdom of heaven silently establishing itself, thrilling along its shrunken veins the saving health of God, allaying the fever of its diseases, and restoring in it a new order and harmony which brings Divine peace on earth. Such is the wondrous picture which Christ gives of the world with the new glory of heaven brightening over it and within it.

But to make this picture a representation of the Church itself, which is Christ's body—in which and by which He is working out this redemption of the world, the organ through which He manifests His truth, and enforces it with the endless tenderness and might of

His suffering love—is to degrade the Church to the world which it redeems, to bring into the Church itself the conflict and confusion of the world, and so undoing her true nature, to paralyse her Divine force, and cloud with sickly eclipse her Divine radiancy. Yet this is the famous doctrine of Multitudinism, as it is called. This is the doctrine of Rome, and of all sacerdotal and Erastian Churches, in which men become members of the Church by birth or baptism, regardless of their moral character and spiritual faith. Such Churches are incoherent masses, with no principle of organic unity, no common life, no powers or possibilities of self-government. Of necessity, therefore, to ensure their continuance, their government, and moral or religious discipline of any kind, authority has to be created and imposed upon them from without, either by the State or by a self-replenished hierarchy.

The *second* evil I shall but briefly indicate, though it has worked and is working disastrously in the world. Because the Church and

the kingdom are affirmed to be the same, and because the kingdom of God is confessedly universal,—for His authority holds, and His law should reign, everywhere, alike in the council chamber of the State, and in the secret chamber of the soul ;—therefore the priestly ruler of the Church claims to have the right to rule in every department of man's life, to direct the public policy of nations, to govern the economy of homes, and even to direct the secret currents of the inner life of every living being. He claims the place of God, for he declares that his rule in the Church means the rule of God's universal kingdom. The logic is irresistible, but the evil consequences have been terrible, and show how false is the premiss on which the logic is built.

And now the *third* evil which has arisen from this confusion of the Church and the kingdom brings me more immediately to the subject of my paper.

Christian men have thought the Church and the kingdom of Heaven were the same, and

so the full scope of the redemptive mission and the ministry of the Church have been misconceived or obscured. The aims of the Church have been confused. Her methods have been indefinite and inadequate, and the glorious ardour of her members which would have been evoked by the grandeur and blessedness of the work given them to do, has been repressed. The fires of redemptive love have burnt low in the Church because the objects and needs of Christ's redemptive work in the world have not been clearly seen by His own people so as to stir those fires into steadfast flame. The kingdom of God is not, cannot be, the Church, for it is the continuing prayer of the Church that *the kingdom of God may come*; and because this is her prayer it is likewise her continuing labour—into which she breathes that spirit of redeeming love which, as her very life blood, pulses through her members from the broken heart of Christ—that this kingdom of God our Father may come in the world, that here, everywhere, by all men and among all

men, in all relationships, His blessed will may be done as it is done in heaven. This prayer of the Church shows, I say, that the kingdom is not the Church. But its brief, great words define exactly and fully the import and issue of the ministry of the Church, and of every member of it. The Church lives, we live as members of the Church, simply in order that by us in this world, now so dark and weary with sin and sore distress, the bright, pure, peaceful kingdom of heaven may come.

Let us gratefully rejoice that many elements of this ministry of the Church have been active and most powerful, and blessedly successful in the world. Especially let us rejoice to-day in the evangelic faith of our fathers, which we confess with them,—the faith that declares the solemn and awful power and curse of sin, which is in the nature of men, which lies at the root of all human evil, and which by every means we seek to reach and overcome, so that men may return penitently

to the obedience and love of their God and Father ;—the faith which declares further that truth which is the very heart of the gospel, that God's own redeeming love has come down into this world to encounter and break this dire enchantment, and loose the heavy bonds of this curse of sin in man ; and that it has spent, and does ever spend itself with its infinite powers, even unto the sacrifice in death of His Son, and the gift of eternal life by His Spirit, to redeem men from the guilt and the death of sin, and to give them power to be the sons of God. These sublime and marvellous truths have been preached. So far, we say, the ministry of the Church has been fulfilled. The great, yea, infinite powers that are thus with us, ready to act for human redemption, are confessed and made known. What then has hindered them in their most glorious redemptive work? Do we not see that these truths form chiefly the theme of our pulpits and our Sunday classes? They form, accordingly, the doctrinal ministry of

a few persons in the Church called and set apart to proclaim them. But this is not the ministry of the whole Church. That redeeming love of our death-crowned Immanuel must be translated and seen in the redeeming love and ministry of all His people in the world around them. It must become practical, human, real, so as to be understood and felt of men. They will believe and know it, we may be sure, when with a tender sympathy, and a healing power, and a righteous purpose, it deals with the present, sore-pressing evils of the world, and saves from them ; when by its redeeming grace and truth it brings to men a fairer, nobler life, which otherwise they wist not of ; when, as of old, it heals all manner of diseases, and brings the kingdom of Heaven nigh unto them. Anew, in another sense, but with equal truth, it may be said, the *Word* must become *flesh* and dwell among men, so that they may behold its glory, full of grace and truth.

The ministry of the Church in the world,

accordingly, as it appears to me, is twofold : First, there is the proclamation of the great mysteries of the kingdom, which have been made known to the Church by our Lord, the deep cause of all human evil in sin, and the redemption wrought for men, and given to men, by the infinite grace of God. These supreme truths nothing must obscure or weaken. They indeed relate chiefly to the conversion and regeneration of the individual soul, but they underlie and give quickening, solemn, and almighty inspiration to all the redemptive work of the Church for humanity ; whilst that work again makes real and intelligible, and credible to suffering and sin-burdened men, this saving love of their Father of which we speak, and the unsearchable riches of Christ that are brought to them.

Secondly : His Gospel is the good news of a kingdom here on *earth*. Christ, through His Church, brings redemption also to human society. His religion, we are wont to say,

is for society—for mankind, as well as for individual men. But, we may say, further, that it is the true religion for individual men, because it is a religion for human society. A man is saved not only by Christ, but into Christ, so that he is touched, and fired with His redeeming Spirit, and yearns to share with Him, in his measure, in the work of saving men from evil. Thus the Church has not only those great mysteries to declare, of which I have spoken. There have also been given to it, by our Lord, the Divine and essential laws of human society, the laws of human conduct, according to which human life can be healthful, and pure, and blessed ; the laws by which this world of mankind can become in very truth the kingdom of Heaven on earth. And this is the ministry of the Church, viz. : in a world where these laws have been ruthlessly ignored and defied and broken by men, and where the endless miseries which afflict humanity have come, the sharp and dreadful penalty of their sin,—to

magnify these laws again, and make them honourable ; to win for them recognition and obedience ; to reveal, apply, and incarnate them in human life, as can only be done by the inspiration and force of Christ's own Spirit in His Church ; and then, finally, by bearing in sympathy and unselfish love like Christ's all these sad and manifold evils of men, gradually to assuage and destroy them. In a world gangrened with the festering vices and sores of human sin, nothing, be sure, but the omnipotent power of a love in the Church of Christ which has clear vision of the righteous will and truth of our Lord, and yet thrills with the ardour of His passion, the pathos of His pity, can bring the healing that it needs, can reach and stanch the deep wounds of our social malady, and awaken the new powers of a healthful social life. For such love alone will win men to learn and do the will of God ;—and His kingdom comes only as His will is done.

Now this second ministry of the Church

is what I mean by the phrase, "The Inner Mission of the Church," and in regard to it there are two passages of Scripture which have to me profound and most vital significance. The first is that passage, "And they went through the towns preaching the gospel and healing everywhere," a passage, you will remember, which in substance is often repeated in the Gospels; as thus, "As ye preach, say, The kingdom of heaven is at hand, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers,"—words which, spoken of the Church in its *first* days, when the little chosen band of disciples were being taught the message and ministry of the Church, are true of the Church in all times. And they show us these two truths. Remember, that the miracles of mercy wrought in Galilee but condense and reveal in bright and sudden splendour,—as electric fires condense and reveal the electric energy of the atmosphere,—the action of the ever-living, healing, all-powerful Spirit of redeeming grace, which animates Christ's Church in

every place, and which does now greater works—wonders indeed of power and love equally with His miracles of mercy, but greater than these,—as Christ Himself told us. Now such miracles of healing mercy must ever attend the preaching of the gospel for two objects, (1) in order that the kingdom of God may be truly known among men as a Divine, social, regenerative power, which brings here and now life and health, peace and goodwill to men, and so heals the ills of a suffering world ; and (2) that the gospel, with its most blessed truth of the unutterable pity and love of our Father to His sinful children, may be interpreted to them, and may find wondering and delightful credence by them, because of the pity and the help which that love brings to them in their present wants and sorrows.

The second passage is spoken of our Lord Himself, and reveals likewise two truths which must never be forgotten by us. "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then

the kingdom of God is come unto you." Now this passage shows us, as so many other words of Scripture, that the myriad evils of human life—evils that afflict alike the body and the mind,—have their deepest root in a mystery of iniquity, in powers of darkness which lurk behind the scenes and movements of this world's drama, and infest even hidden places of the human soul. These have to be met and overcome and cast out, if the evils that oppress humanity are to be destroyed. Are you appalled, then, by the difficulty of our redeeming work? Remember the second truth in His word, "*I* cast out devils by the Spirit of God." He is with us, who has received all power, and has vanquished all enemies. We are but the members of His Body, and it is He who through us still casts out devils by the Spirit of God.

I have thus indicated what I mean by the "Inner Mission of the Church" establishing everywhere in the world the kingdom of heaven.

Does the Church of Christ lift up her hands in despair, standing in the midst of this awful world of human sin, with its foul turbid depths of impurity, its wild cruelty, its raging waves, as of the sea, foaming out their own shame, and the wailing lament of an exceeding bitter cry, which sometimes pierces the soul and makes it shudder with infinite anguish and the pathos of its melancholy moan?

Ah! well did I say that it was only the passion of our Redeemer's love burning in the breast of the Church that could inspire her for such a mission as this, to face and quell these monstrous wrongs, and sojace these great sorrows of our fallen, sin-worn world.

But such love is ours, for it is Christ's. Nor let us think that ALL is so dark and terrible in the world. Man is fallen; but the Spirit of God has ever brooded over the dark waters of the weltering abyss in this sinful world, and even in the darkest heart, the

most depraved and saddest life, we shall find some seeds of good, which we can nourish into blossoming life. There are endless powers, believe me, working for us in the souls of men and in the providence of God, if we lay hold of this redemptive mission of Christ. Think, too, since the Sun of righteousness has risen on this dark world, with healing in His wings, what progress has been made in human Society. Despite the failures and corruptions of His Church—that one Institution through which alone He can effectively work out a world's redemption, the kingdom of heaven has been coming nigher to mankind. And in how many hearts and homes has it truly come in its power and joy! Then, best of all encouragement in all our work, remember, He, our Lord, is with us, with His infinite patience and wisdom, and His victorious grace.

It seems to me that this redemptive ministry of the Church is now being understood and fulfilled as never before. The ministry

of the Church, I have said, has been misconceived ; and therefore it has been but too feebly and ignorantly attempted and carried out. Now, however, that cloud has passed, the dimness of our vision is taken away, and the Church awakes to see the glory of the arduous mission to which her Lord summons, and for which He equips her. If, then, in the weakness and dimness of the past, so much has been, what may not there now be accomplished ! What brightness of exulting hope may now gladden our hearts, as we go forth in His name conquering and to conquer !

But if I thus speak hopefully, I must state in conclusion the requirements that are essential for the attainment of the noblest and speediest success in the Inner Mission of the Church.

(1) This Inner Mission of the Church requires and provokes, and gives fitting occasion for, the union of all Christ's Churches. I can understand how, for purposes of preaching and teaching, and of spiritual edification,

modal differences with regard to doctrine, worship, and church order, may have given rise to, and in a sense may justify in the present, the different sections of Christ's Church in our country. But in this social, philanthropic work of Christ, no such reason for division exists. On the contrary, every motive impels to concerted action. Otherwise the vast and varied work that has to be done will be performed irregularly. One Church will traverse, and it may be thwart, the work of the others: and the broken and disjointed efforts of each, which by harmonious combination had sufficed for our mighty task, will necessarily fail if such union do not exist. And oh! how glorious the vision in our land, when by this confederacy and oneness of all Christ's own redeemed people, engaged in this redemptive work, He is exalted and revealed among all men, as our one only Lord, the Redeemer of the world. Then shall His prayer be fulfilled and answered, "that they all may be one,

that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

(2) This Inner Mission of the Church will find a definite service—a special and suited work for every member of His Church, however weak or ignorant or poor. All cannot preach or teach. The ministrations of the Spirit, how various they are! and His gifts are equally various. There is no Christian man or woman, who has felt the love of the Cross glowing in his heart, but has felt a desire to do something for Christ, to give some help, some cheer, to those who need it in His name. This redemptive impulse of the Christian heart has been too often stifled. It has not been taken up and used and disciplined in the great ministry of the Church. Now, in this vast field of the Church's redemptive mission each will be summoned and able to take his part, if it be only to give a cup of cold water to the thirsty, and by this service of all, under wise and definite direction and guidance, the great work of the Church will

be surely fulfilled. Thus no Divine element in the life of the Church will be wasted, no breathing of the Spirit but shall transmute itself into holy deeds of charity, no faculty or gift and talent of any one of its members but shall be used with the noblest usury in the Master's service.

(3) This Inner Mission of the Church must become the *business* of the Church, to be accomplished with rigorous method, indomitable persistency, the wise application of means to ends, the employment of specific natural endowments and spiritual gifts in specific and suitable offices and duties. That is what we intend by the word "business." It is that which always makes business successful. Ah! brethren, this is indeed a great business which the Church has undertaken—the "Business of the Kingdom of God," needing, as no other business in the world, the highest faculties, the noblest wisdom, the fittest agencies, the most economic methods, the most resolute enthusiasm. To be truly successful this

ministry of the Church must be the business of each of her members, and the Church must organize and train and use every power and the grace of all her members so that thus most efficiently, economically, and successfully, this work of the Lord be done by her. It is this great business which the Church has been formed, and is sustained by our Lord, to carry out. Let our motto, my brethren, to-day, be those sacred words of our Lord, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's *business*."

(4) And now, finally, if you think of this business of the redemptive work of the Church in all its magnitude and difficulty,—to understand and vanquish the complicated and deep-rooted evils of human society, and to inweave the equities and charities of the Divine righteousness into the divers relationships of human life, you will agree with me, that in this work there is the pre-eminent need of Divine wisdom. Here, hitherto, has been the lack and the failure of the Church.

In every age, as in our own, where the ardours of the Cross have been kindled, I see teeming activities of charity, dealing with human poverty and wretchedness. But charity alone, unguided by wisdom, worketh evil, although *she thinketh none*. For this redemption of humanity the Church must give her wisest, her ablest men, and they must give their best and wisest thoughts: men profoundly versed in the Divine laws of human society, skilled and expert in the study of social phenomena, and baptized with the Spirit of Christ's own redeeming purpose and love. And the continual conference and counsel of these men should give direction to all the activities of the Church.

I have sketched, as some of you know, a plan by which local councils in every town or district should be formed; and ultimately, perhaps, a central council should be formed in London for the whole country, in which the wisest representatives of all sections of the Catholic Church of Christ, chosen by the

Church and acting on its behalf, should thus meet regularly and confer together,—studying earnestly, in the light of the revealed will of God, the intricate problems of society, exploring the accessible, though often remote and concealed, sources of human evil ; and then direct by their wisdom the myriad ministries of the whole Church, so that these ministries may sustain and assist each other,—adjusting them most truly to the ends they seek, and co-ordinating them so that they will conspire with a resistless power and in a glorious harmony to achieve a world's redemption. Assuredly, for this work we must confess, as never before, that the redeeming Spirit of Christ is the spirit of wisdom ; and, brethren, “Wisdom IS from above, first pure, then peaceable, full of mercy and good works, . . . AND THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS SOWN IN PEACE OF THEM THAT MAKE PEACE.”



THE circular sent out by me, inviting former students and many friends of the Institute to celebrate its 21st anniversary, contains the following paragraphs, and the mission appeal which is appended was issued in connection with mission services held in the town and county of Nottingham at that time.

“The Committee (and I strongly share the feeling) are desirous that this celebration of our ‘majority’ should magnify the great missionary idea and purpose of the Church, which the Institute lives to promote, and give some blessed impulse to the redemptive ministry of our Churches in this town and county, and throughout England ; and that it should also strengthen and develop the work of the Institute, and of all who have been associated with it.

“You know that the redemptivè mission

of the Church—the gospel which we are to preach, and for which this age is earnestly crying out, is to my mind much grander and more human and real than some conceive it to be. We need all the fire and spiritual unction of the glorious evangelic faith of our fathers; for, the first fundamental harmony to be restored is that of the soul to God; but the love that can win the souls of men back to His heart, shows itself as in Christ Himself, in bearing and taking away the diseases and sorrows of men in the present evil world.

“Thus our Gospel is not the sacrifice of this world to the next, or other-worldliness, as Infidel Socialism says. It is the bringing down, in sacrifice and service by the Church of our Lord, of the Grace and Truth, the Harmony and Peace of the eternal world to this distracted and sinworn world; so that now here on earth, among sinful men and women, the kingdom of Heaven is seen to come. Our prayer, and therefore our mission and our labour is, that this kingdom may

come, here, in the souls of individuals, and in the society around us.

“Let us make this Anniversary an occasion for uplifting among men, especially among the millions of our working people, this old true Gospel, that the Kingdom of Heaven has come nigh unto them.

“To this end I ask you to come and join us at a series of meetings to be held from the 24th to the 26th of this month.

“J. B. PATON.”

THE GOOD NEWS.

“*Be ye sure of this*, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”—*Luke* x. 11.

* * * * *

“For unto you is born a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.”

“GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST,
and on earth peace, good will towards men.”
—*Luke* ii. 11, 14.

READ, AND ASK, ARE THESE THINGS SO?

This is good news for the world: "THAT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS COME NIGH UNTO US." Too good to be true: some of you will say. But many in this town can assure you that it is true. And we want you on Wednesday night, at 7.30, to hear some of us "*showing these glad tidings!*"

What makes the joy and harmony of heaven? It is this, that the love of God, our Father, fills every heart, and that His sons and daughters there do His good and perfect will in everything. And the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN comes here, when our Father's love fills our heart, and we learn to do what is right and helpful to one another in everything—which is our Father's will concerning us.

Now, dear friends, this is THE GOOD NEWS we have to tell. Some of you mistake the glorious gospel of the blessed God. THE GOSPEL is just this—that God wants this world to become like His heaven, and that

He fills those who believe it and who become His sons and daughters with the same intense desire as His own, so as to labour with Him for this end.

You know there is great evil and great sorrow in the world—you may feel them in your own heart. How are these to be taken away? How can the kingdom of Heaven with its pureness and peace come into a wicked world like this—into hearts like ours? It is no easy matter: God has shown that He thinks it is not an easy matter. But this “GOOD NEWS” of which we speak tells us what He has done, and what He makes us do for so great a result: and God’s way, we know and can show you, is right and will certainly succeed.

For, THE GOSPEL shows us the Infinite Love of our God, seeking us and spending itself in measureless sacrifice, and labour, and suffering, to win us back to Himself, to free us from the bondage and the curse of all evil, and to restore in us and in human society the

order, health, and happiness which spring only from His righteousness.

Yes, it is the power of an Eternal Divine Love which has stooped even to the cross and the grave for weary, sinful men, that alone can lift them up from their dark troubles and sins, break their heavy bonds, give them true love to one another, and so bring to this world *the brightness and peace of heaven*. And we want to tell you that His love, breaking in its passionate desire for you now, as it broke in the heart of Christ on the cross, *seeks you now* to save and bless you.

Is not Redeeming Love like this, seen in the life and death of Christ, worthy of our God, our Father. It is the very Noblest, Highest, Best that man can conceive. Therefore magnify our God with us, who has done such great things for us. Come in penitence and joyful trust to our Father and yours, and receive forgiveness and a new life through His Son, who has shown us His love.

But more than this, God fires the hearts of all who come to Him with love like His own. They only are true Christians who have the Spirit of Redeeming love, which seeks with sympathy, and with self-denying service like Christ's to save men from the sin and ignorance and misery that beset them. We are thus co-workers with God.

It is true, Christian men and women have not done what they ought in the spirit of their beloved Master. We who write this are Christian men, and we confess our guilty shortcoming in this, which is our highest work on earth—our Father's business. It is our fault, not Christ's. He rebukes us; and we call upon ourselves and all who love Him to follow in His steps, and labour and pray as He taught us, that the kingdom of God may come upon earth, and that His will may be done on earth AS IT IS DONE IN HEAVEN.

Yet, in our town is not Christ seen in His people helping the poor, relieving the sick, raising the fallen? If you look around and

ask, you will find men and women doing untold service, and making great sacrifices, every day, for Christ's sake. Nearly every good thing in human society to-day comes from the teaching and the Spirit of Christ. Think what the world would be without Christ! How much better He has made the world; and He will make it vastly better still, so that it shall indeed become the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

Come and join us in this glorious "business," which we have got in hand, of raising the world nearer heaven, and making all men brothers indeed, whatever their class or their country, for God is the Father of us all. Let us know and do His will: and poverty, and ignorance, and sorrow will die out of the land. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN WILL THEN HAVE COME TO US IN NOTTINGHAM.

THE
PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE
IN RELATION TO
THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.

THE PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE IN RELATION TO THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.*

WITH the summer, Englishmen and Englishwomen, hybernating in their island of mist and storm, sweep in flocks across the wide kingdoms of continental Europe. They flee their winter-home for rest and change, with the recreation that these bring,—for the pleasures that come of seeing bright, deep, sunlit skies, of sauntering through picturesque mediæval towns, of mixing with many peoples of strange tongue and attire, or of gazing on scenes of historic interest, and inhaling health in Europe's grand sanatorium—the Alps. I wish to open up to Christian travellers

* Address delivered at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Alliance at Southport, in October, 1879.

another and deeper source of interest and pleasure—the study of the religious condition of the countries through which they travel. Everywhere on the Continent there are zealous, holy Christian men and women, labouring with high faith, amid great difficulties, for the Gospel of our Lord. These are delighted with the sympathy of English Christians who visit them. It is from such friends that I have learnt most of what I relate in this paper. And I relate it that I may have the opportunity of exhorting Christian travellers, in whatever European country they visit, to seek out their Christian brethren there, and learn from them something of the religious work and warfare that are being carried on in that country. Let them thus endorse, supplement, or correct what I report as the result of my inquiries ; for I desire to present the most conspicuous and important facts, so far as I have discerned them, in modern Europe which set forth its present religious state, and indicate

at once our opportunities and our methods for spreading the Gospel and establishing the kingdom of our Lord in Europe.

These facts will show us how, everywhere and in every sphere, the question of religion and the claims of Christ's doctrine and Church are engaging the minds of men ; that the age of indifference is past ; that not only the educated and the governing classes, but the masses of the people, are being agitated, from various causes and in various ways, in regard to the position, the true nature, and the authority of Christianity—both as a Doctrine and an Institution ; and that amidst all this ferment of excitement and fervid antagonisms, there are emerging into ever clearer light and more definite activity certain principles which either favour or directly support the Evangelical faith and freedom of that spiritual Christianity which we who are present here unite to testify, and desire to promulgate and extend throughout Europe.

I.

The *first* momentous fact is the astounding development, the organized activities, and the aggrandized influence of the Roman Church during this century. Who that witnessed the decrepitude and senile decay of the Roman Catholic Church during the last century, or that saw the convulsions of its seeming final dissolution during the turbulent Revolutionary epoch at the beginning of this century, could have conjectured its wonderful resurrection, its haughty assumptions, and its ascendancy during these latter years? That stormy Revolution re-tempered the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church. And more! though it dissolved the old fabric of its organization, it fused, like a strong fire, the different elements which it embraced, and even the separate national churches that owed fealty to the Pope, into one closely compacted body. And with this new organi-

zation a new life possessed and awoke that body.

Now, the causes of this recent development of the Roman Church I am not to trace. It is the fact itself I have to exhibit in its full significance. This development, then, though inspired in all its forms by one spirit, and drawing vitality from one source, may be viewed in two aspects—the inward and outward. The *inward* development of the Church shows a rigorous uniformity impressed on every part of the Church, and its direct, universal, unconditional subjection to one despotic human authority. The *Roman* Church—one of Pharaoh's lean kine!—has devoured the *Catholic* Church; and of this Church the Pope says, as Louis XIV. said of the State, "It is I." He now concentrates in one solitary person the authority, grace, truth, and honour, which the Lord gave His universal Church. Accordingly the very antagonistic pole of true Catholicity has been reached. Its most schismatic denial

has now been proclaimed. The "All" is now merged in One. Against the Universal has been raised the Unit.

Together with this reconstruction of the Roman Church on the Jesuit model of absolute obedience to one will and of dependence upon one head,—a task which has been accomplished almost entirely by the efforts of the Society of Jesus, and of those modern "Orders" that are affiliated with it,—there has been a corresponding change in the religious discipline and in the moral teaching of the Church. The fevered, highly-stimulating religious exercises, the ascetic and mystic literature, the vivid, continuous excitement of emotion, the sensuous and imaginative influences, and the vigilant personal priestly superintendence which mark the modern propaganda of Rome, all savour in like manner of the Jesuit Fathers and their discipline. Liguori is the modern Loyola, who has rule now over the whole Church, and not over a separate Order ; and the discipline

which he has instituted and directs through the thousands of Roman priests, is such as intoxicates the feeling, darkens the reason, destroys the sense of independent responsibility, and subjugates the will. This teaching and discipline, therefore, harmonize perfectly with the Jesuit polity of despotic and resistless authority that is now impressed on the Church. And as this Jesuit discipline directs and fashions the religious experience of Roman Catholics, so Jesuit morality directs and fashions their conduct. The text-books on "Morals," in all important Roman Catholic seminaries, are written by Jesuits. The Jesuit morality, which Pascal scathed with the mingled flames of his keen irony and hot indignation in the "Provincial Letters," has become the recognised authoritative moral doctrine of the whole Church. And this Jesuit polity, discipline, and morality are all parts of one system which fit together and supplement each other. The *inward* development of the Roman Catholic Church may accordingly be

briefly, but most accurately summed up in one word—that Church is now transformed into a gigantic Jesuit Society.

Its *outward* development reveals the same terrible energy and controlling purpose of the Jesuit Society and its affiliated orders, in the attempt to dominate the ruling secular powers of the world, in the lust to conquer men by every means—legitimate or illegitimate—by which they may be conquered into submission to the Church. When kings ruled as well as reigned, then to enthrall and govern kings was the policy and boast of the Jesuit priests. Ours, however, is a democratic age. The people now rule, while kings reign. Hence the methods that are now adopted by the Roman Church to subdue and enthrall the people, and through them to gain hold of the secular governing power—the coercive arm of authority, without which the Roman Church feels its miserable impotence and a hungry discontent. Two of these methods are well known to all of us ; viz., the popular

excitement of awe-inspiring prodigies and of enthusiastic pilgrimages, and the use of all educational agencies and influences—plying them from earliest years, and over all classes of the people, so that young minds, indoctrinated and drilled by them, must, in all human probability, become either their bondsmen for life or apostates from all faith for ever. But, besides these, the Church in all parts of Europe is using the two chief instruments for leading and governing the people which our age has in a manner discovered; viz., the cheap press, and the power of organized associations. Both of these are sedulously and skilfully employed with indefatigable energy and craft. The extent to which the modern principle of co-operation and the modern impulse towards associated action are utilized by the Roman priesthood for their objects, has not been duly appreciated. These associations are formed for all the several classes of society, and they ostensibly seek the most varied objects of philanthropy,

social recreation, or trade. But be they what they may, the priesthood by their means stimulate and secure the religious faith or zealotry of their people through the combination that is formed with themselves and with one another, and so train the people for concerted, obedient action in any arena to which they may lead them. Now, these latter methods are in themselves legitimate, and even serve as models for other churches to follow. Unfortunately, however, they are manifestly used by the Roman priesthood as engines of one supreme purpose and policy; viz., to gain political power, to exalt the supremacy of their Church over civil society, and to overthrow those individual liberties of conscience and of faith which are obnoxious to their Church, but which are guaranteed by modern civilization. On the other hand, fortunately for mankind, the press and the principle of association cannot be worked without awakening the intelligence of the people, and giving them to feel their power; so that we

are assured the Roman priesthood, in evoking and using these moral forces, are creating a Frankenstein, which, ere long, will destroy those that have called them into being.

Thus we see the Church of Rome realizing and perfecting its own ideal in the rigid, mechanical unity imposed on the Church everywhere, and in the iron despotic bands with which it girds and imprisons the people that are subject to it. From this Church, thus relentlessly fulfilling its hard, selfish destiny, educated men have for centuries revolted, and have either fallen into sullen, infidel indifference, or risen into indignant and violent hostility not only against the Church, but against the Faith which it professed to embody. This process is going on in all so-called Catholic countries to-day. But since 1870 an organized protest and testimony by many eminent Catholics has been made against the last developments of the Roman Church in the Vatican; and an Old Catholic Church has been formed. In Austria, Bohe-

mia, and Italy, this Old Catholic movement is tainted at its source by Rationalism, which makes any Church organization and life utterly impossible ; but in Germany and Switzerland it holds firmly the positive faith of Christianity,—is rapidly freeing itself from mediæval superstitions, as it has denounced and renounced the modern Jesuit practices of the Church,—and in some of its foremost leaders is inspired by a noble evangelism—a spiritual Evangelical faith which gives hope for its future. Hitherto the Old Catholic Church has chiefly drawn to itself educated men and women ; hitherto, likewise, it has chiefly been engaged in defining its principles and organizing itself for independent existence and activity. It not only wears the Catholic name, but it exalts, as against Protestants, two Catholic principles in regard to which I confess my sympathy with it. The *first* is that all local or national Christian Churches should seek some visible expression before the world of their unity in Christ, and

stand in relations of helpful communion with one another ; and the *second* is that the Church is not, as most of our Protestant symbols teach, an institution which exists only for the faithful preaching of God's Word and the right administration of the sacraments ; but that it is a living and life-giving organization, which, if it be compacted of living members and be thus living in Christ, its abiding spirit, does impart grace and healing to men, of which its sacraments are but the signs. Now, my earnest prayer is that the Old Catholic Church, recovering the primitive spiritual faith of the Church, and inspired by these grand Catholic principles, may no longer be content with learned and vehement protests against Papal despotism and infallibility (for these negations will not move and convert the Catholic peoples of Europe), but that it may press valiantly among the peoples with missionary ardour to proclaim the divine and saving faith which it has recovered, and which it knows the Roman

Church has long buried underneath its frauds and idolatries.

II.

The second important fact to be noticed is the relation of the Governments of Europe to the Christian Church. Religion is now in Europe too active and obtrusive a force to be ignored by Governments ; nor can it now be leashed and harnessed by them to serve mere purposes of statecraft. It is too vigorous and independent for that ! We behold two great powers in modern Europe that have grown contemporaneously during this century, and yet are in every point contrasted with each other. One is the modern constitutional State, which draws its authority and powers *from* the people, and exists in order to protect and guarantee the freedom of its members ; the other is the Papal Church, which imposes its absolute authority *upon* the people, and exists to annul the freedom of its members. Now wherever these two powers are in any sense

co-ordinate—*i.e.*, claim or exercise a sway over the same people—conflict between them is inevitable. This conflict breaks out in the political arena. And the saddest fact in the religious history of modern Europe is this, that in many countries the two great opposing political parties are respectively styled Catholics and Liberals—the Liberals mostly infidel, as they know no Christianity but the Papal, fighting for freedom without religion ; the Catholics fighting against freedom in the name of religion. Now in this conflict between the State and the Papal Church, or any Protestant Church which claims a Pope-like dominion over its members, the State has been obliged to repress and check the domination of the Church over its members, and to restrain it within the domain of spiritual influences,—in order that it might preserve against the gigantic forces and terrorism of the Church as a corporate body, the individual rights and liberties of its own citizens, who were at the same time members

of that Church. In some cases the State has pushed its authority to this end too far. But I wish to fix attention on two momentous principles, wholly good as I deem them, which, as the result of this conflict, are being generally recognised in Europe. First : Many influences have conspired to awaken the " Church " idea and impulse in our time. It is not only their own salvation that concerns men. The thought of the " Church " of Christ—of the larger commonwealth of His members—fills the Christian world everywhere. Now, the modern State, whilst it has had to repress a " Despotic Churchism," is yet obliged by the principles of liberty—of religious liberty and liberty of association—which it guarantees, to concede a right of independent existence and of freedom to Christian Churches which in former centuries was unknown. Consequently throughout Europe the Church of Christ is recovering for itself, though slowly, an autonomy—a distinct organization and right of self-govern-

ment—which, till this century, has had no existence since the fourth century. Second : The modern State necessarily recognises and protects the rights of the laity of each Church. It cannot regard property, devoted to the uses of its subjects who are members of a Church, as being the property of an ecclesiastic appointed by a foreign spiritual potentate. It *must* protect its own subjects, and maintain their right over that which exists, and is guarded by the State, for their behoof. Consequently in Germany recent legislation has restored to the parochial community and the episcopal chapter their ancient rights in the appointment of the parish clergyman or bishop, and in the use of parochial or capitular property. In Italy, too, the present Government has sustained the right of the parish to elect its own priest and confer upon him the parish manse and glebe—against the claims of the bishop to impose a priest of his own choice upon them. In France, likewise, as we may foretell, if we

read the signs of the times, this great revolution in the administration of the Church will follow inevitably from the constitutional freedom enjoyed by the people under the Republic. And yet, by this simple right of constitutional law and liberty, a change is being introduced into the Roman system which saps its very base, and will shake it to its fall.

In one direction, however, a great evil has ensued from this conflict between the modern State and the Church. The Church has jealously sought the authority and resources of the State in order to enforce its dogmas and discipline in the education of children. Well, where the so-called Liberals are predominant, as in Holland, they have made the National Schools secular, and these secular schools have not been, as is often innocently conjectured in this country, schools that are free from all religious bias or complexion of any kind. No ; the Liberals have done that which they so indignantly reproach the

Church for doing. They have used these schools to enforce their irreligious doctrines, so that in many places in Holland both the Jesuit and the Evangelical Churches have been obliged, whilst paying the school-tax, to erect and maintain their own separate schools in order that the children might not be perverted by the anti-Christian teaching of the public schools. Gambetta, too, in France, has declared the want of France to be National Schools, in which the dogma shall be taught that science is the *only providence* for man. Secular schools may therefore be, in Holland* actually are, secularistic : and the State in refusing its support to the Church has given in that country effective support to infidelity.

Leaving, however, on one side the difficult question of public education, if we look at the religious state of Europe, so far as it is affected by the action of Governments, we shall see these three things.

* In this year, 1887, the same may be said of many National Schools in France and Switzerland.

First, it is generally recognised that religion is the mightiest and most important fact in the life of a people, and that the character of their religion vitally affects their political history. At a recent meeting of the editorial staff of the *Journal des Débats*, which was attended by a friend of mine, all of them, though either nominally Roman Catholics or professedly sceptic, confessed that the exhaustion and near extinction of Protestantism in France by the St. Bartholomew massacre and the dragonnades of Louis XIV. had wrought in her that *moral* impotence which made her such an easy prey alternately to revolution and despotism. Second, the Churches of Christ are gradually assuming a distinct and a more independent form of existence, apart from the State, though they are being vigorously restrained by law within their proper spiritual sphere. And, third, the laity of each Church are recognised as having rights of their own in the Church—as against any ecclesiastical superiors, whatever au-

thority these latter may have usurped and may attempt to enforce. Now these prevalent ideas gaining acceptance throughout Europe—even Catholic Europe—seem to me to show a glorious opportunity for the acceptance through them of evangelical truth. For evangelical truth vindicates that individual liberty which the modern State maintains ; and secures it by the highest religious sanctions—bringing each man into immediate fellowship with God through Christ, and asserting his responsibility to God alone. Further, it seeks only the adhesion and consent of an intelligent, willing faith ; it draws men into a free communion with one another only because they are filled with one Spirit ; and it abjures absolutely the coercive powers of the law in the operations and discipline of the Church. Whilst, lastly, it proclaims the ministry of the Church to the State and to society to be not the dictatorship and rule of a despotic power, but the self-sacrificing service of a love which blesses those that freely accept its

divine gifts. This Evangelical doctrine, I say, corresponds to the needs of modern Europe, and fulfils its ideas, at once, of a true religion, and of a true Church. Hence I believe it will, ere long, have general acceptance and an ascendancy in Europe.

III.

The two facts I have recited are mainly objective, and belong to the outward history of events. The next is rather subjective, and belongs to the inward history of thought. Those transcendental philosophies that ruled the mind of Europe in the early part of this century, and which sublimated Christianity into a series of philosophic ideas, have disappeared. Along with them that cloudy phantasmagoria of the mythical theory, which Strauss propounded, according to which the supernatural truths and events recorded in the Bible are but a mirage or *fata morgana* painted in the air, which reflects and mocks the credulous dreams and desires of a reli-

gious people, has utterly dissolved, and "left not a rack behind." The mystical Rationalism, so popular in Europe during the last fifty years, which idly sought reconciliation between Christianity and philosophy by compromises hung like Mahomet's coffin 'twixt heaven and earth, resting on nothing,—by ideal truths, most indefinite and ghost-like, which haunted an intermediate realm between the Supernatural and the Natural, and belonged strictly to neither, is likewise rapidly losing ground. Opinions and Faiths are becoming much more definite, concrete, and positive;—though by the process they assume direct and aggressive antagonism to each other. Thus, on the one hand, we see throughout Europe a hard scientific Materialism or Naturalism supplanting the Ideal speculations that used to delight and nourish the schools of unbelief. On the other hand, the Christian Church everywhere is securing itself within the entrenchment of a positive, emphatic faith in a Supernatural Revelation

from God, and a Supernatural Redemption that is accomplished by His omnipotent grace. I do not say that the Church abjures philosophy. There is a philosophy of Christianity ; but Christianity is not a philosophy. Nor do I say that the old definitions of orthodox faith are accepted without revision or change. The spirit of the Lord giveth liberty, whilst it leads—from stage to stage—into all truth. But everywhere the faith of the Church is being stripped from all rationalistic glosses and entangling compromises : and she witnesses boldly and clearly to men of a divine supernatural truth and grace which she has been created and is commissioned to testify.

There are two other phenomena of our times full of significance and hope. Underneath and amid the cold, dark shadow of materialistic infidelity that has settled on large portions of Europe, there are to be heard the moanings of a sad despair and a yearning after God, if haply He may be

found. From Bohemia in the south-east, where Protestantism was butchered into silence, to Sweden in the north-west, where it has been drugged into stupor; amid the bigoted and superstitious Catholic peasants of Italy and Spain, and the freethinking working men of Germany and France,—we hear of wonderful revivals in insulated places—a spark of truth suddenly igniting a prepared people, and flaming into a marvellous light. Lord Radstock can tell us of the welcome to the Gospel in Russia, and probably of secret Bible meetings among eminent Russian nobility in Paris and Wiesbaden; and I have heard through friends of a splendid awakening of evangelical life in Macedonia and Epirus, and the regions round about. I believe, however, there is vastly more of this anxious desire, this dumb, aching need of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God than we are at all aware of; if only the Evangelic Churches were to probe deep and wide for it, search for it, appeal to it, and evoke it by the

persistency and power of their own faith. The Revival meeting which stands out in my memory above all others as the one most profoundly moved and inspired by the Divine Spirit was one in Paris, when Reginald Radcliffe addressed a large assembly of Parisian *ouvriers*, in a public hall, on the story of the Prodigal Son. His English words were translated by good old Frederic Monod ; but though spoken in English, they thrilled and broke with resistless power the hearts of that crowd. Yet these were all French working-men, said to be the most reckless and obstinate of unbelievers. Yes, there is everywhere a stir among the dry bones—a lamentation and crying goeth up from the burdened stricken hearts of men. They seek their God, and would be at peace with Him. And in response to this feeling, I notice another phenomenon of our time ; viz., that the Evangelical Churches of Europe are again becoming Missionary Churches in Europe. I need not say of the young Churches of Italy and

Spain, how they glow with evangelical zeal. It is their very life. But a change is coming over the spirit of the Protestant Churches of France, Germany, and Scandinavia. Hitherto the notion has prevailed that all the Baptized were Christian, and that though living in open unbelief or contemptuous indifference of God, the Church by offering its public ordinances fulfilled its duty to them. It did not regard them as unregenerate and unsaved, as making a very world of heathenism at home which must be invaded, conquered, and won for Christ by precisely the same intrepid onset and organized missionary crusade as the heathen abroad. Now, I believe these Churches are preparing themselves more or less for this glorious home mission. And I conceive that it is thus that English Churches can best aid in diffusing the Gospel in Europe, by inciting these Evangelical Churches to an earnest, spiritual propaganda of this kind, and sustaining them in it. It is poor work to help Churches on the Continent

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simply to drag on year after year a starved, drivelling existence. It is a blessed work to help them, few though they be in number, if they are aroused by this mighty Inspiration, and are with dauntless courage and tireless zeal labouring to bring these great Continental nations to the obedience and freedom of a living faith in Christ.

IV.

My last division will be very brief. It sets forth, however, another prominent fact which must not be overlooked. The spirit of our age is socialistic. Individualism is accounted to be selfishness. Men place before themselves the glory of the commonwealth—the larger interest and greater good of the society of which the individual is a member—as the noblest end of life. Even Materialism preaches this doctrine ; it is the very gospel of Comtism. The great movement on the Continent which has the title of the “ Social Democracy,” though infidel, is inspired with

this generous sentiment. English Secularism is touched with the same elevated thought. Now, we believe that only the *mighty impulse* of GRACE—*i.e.*, of self-sacrificing love, which seeks the righteousness of God, and to establish His righteous law everywhere—will suffice to achieve any true social reform among men. Christianity is the true Secularism. Its Divine powers are all embodied in the Church for the healing of the nations. I have accordingly viewed with intense interest the establishment of the “Inner Mission” on the Continent, which seeks to apply the energies of Christian love and righteousness to the removal of pressing, darkening social evils, and so to make men everywhere see that Christianity aims at the regeneration of society, and that Christ our Lord is the Saviour of mankind—of society as of individuals. For it is thus I conceive and picture to myself the Church of the Future:—it is thus I would have all see it with me:—having an Evangelic mind; a Puritan conscience; a Catholic heart; and a

body apparelled and radiant with blessed Charities that will give help and healing to mankind amid all sorrows, and that will help them to understand and believe the eternal CHARITY—the Love embosomed in the heart of Christ, and poured out in His Blood and Spirit—that will lift them all into the LIFE eternal.

WOMAN'S GREAT WORK
IN THE CHURCH.

WOMAN'S GREAT WORK IN THE CHURCH.*

THE study of the miracles of our Lord and of the Apostolic Church may, I think, be widened so as to include other views than are common of their nature and import ; and so as to show us certain Divine powers abiding in the Church which should flow continually from the Church into the world, leading it to the faith and obedience of Christ. Miracles are not merely the manifestations of a supernatural or Divine power, which clothe him who works them. They are such, and as such have a permanent place among the evidences of Christianity ; but they are more. They reveal in the clearest form, in that world

* Address delivered at a Conference in Nottingham, in 1875.

of sense which all men feel and understand, as though they were majestic symbols or pictures, the redeeming love and mission of our Lord and His Church. And they typify in express and significant visible acts the mightier spiritual salvation which the Spirit of the Lord accomplishes in men. They are all works of mercy as well as works of might. In them we see the wounds and woes, though but external, of sin-stricken nature healed and assuaged. The imperfect is lifted up, and crowned with perfection. Death is subdued and quickened into life. But yet more—they are not only evidences and symbols of Christ's redemption, they have further a marvellous exciting and magnetic power. You see in the Gospels how they draw multitudes to witness and experience them. They startle indifference and compel attention. They strike the dull senses of men, and sharpen them with eager curiosity and questioning. They surround Christ and His Apostles with crowds, who otherwise had

passed heedlessly, but who now listen with awed spirits to the words of life which they speak.

Accordingly we find three words used in the New Testament to designate these three aspects of miracles. They are styled *mighty works*, or works of power, *signs* or symbols, and *wonders*. These three phrases are the only ones used to describe the miracles of the New Testament ; and they do with happy and perfect accuracy set forth their threefold nature and intention. It is interesting, moreover, to observe how gradually in the Gospel history the first conception of miracle, and the word which denotes it, as a mighty work or work of power, give place to the other two conceptions of miracle, in which its moral use is discerned, as well as its subserviency to the spiritual truth which it illustrates, and upon which it fastens the serious attention of men. Either phrase—"signs" or "wonders"—occurs but rarely in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, and towards their close, but con-

stantly in the later Gospel of John, in the Book of the Acts, and in the Epistles; whilst throughout the three early Gospels the "mighty works" occurs on every page. So we see how the thought of power—mere power—dies away in the glory of that saving love which the miracles exhibit, and which they flash upon the astonished gaze of the world.

We learn accordingly how our Lord repeats in His works the gracious but necessary condescension of His advent and presence amongst men. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, in order that our eyes might see, and our hands handle, that body which clothes and reveals Him. And so in His miracles He clothes the naked word of His truth, as it were, with a body of living flesh—a rich humanity which thrills upon every sense. He touches and vivifies it with bountiful human sympathies. He surrounds it with, and explains it by means of, tender healing works which come down at once to the rudest ap-

prehension of men, which stand forth bodily, to be, as it were, seen and handled of men, which graciously draw their heart and open it to the higher influences of love ; and which exhibit in glorious outward symbols, so that all shall be compelled to understand them, the nobler works of spiritual healing and salvation which He has come here and dwells here for ever to accomplish. He is visibly manifest in them, as One who bears our grief and carries our sorrows. And as men see how mightily, willingly, blessedly He does this in the *sensible sphere* of bodily disease and sorrow, they are helped and led to understand how He carries the deeper, deadlier burthens of our sin and its hidden woe. His grace shines upward through the senses to the soul. The outward speaks, in language which cannot be gainsayed and is promptly understood, to the inward spirit. Men must see, as well as hear, ere they believe.

Now such power abode in the human body of Christ—does no such power abide in the

Church, that mysterious, ever-living, visible body of our Lord on the earth, in which He dwells, and in which He finishes the work the Father gave Him to do? Has it but a Divine doctrine to teach, a Divine truth to proclaim, and no gracious works of humanity to perform, wherewith to bless mankind, and draw them to learn its higher mysteries of love, or wherewith to interpret and explain, as with bright symbols, to the outer world, and to every sense of man, the true Spirit of her Lord, and the glory of the redemption which He offers to men? Is not the spiritual word which she possesses to be now incarnated for men—touched as it were with the instincts and passions of our flesh—animated and clothed by human sympathies, so as fitly to dwell among men? And is the love of God, of which it is the minister, to be proclaimed to suffering men by weak speech only, and not by the winning, mighty voice of sympathetic ministries, miracles of mercy, deeds of love—which thrill home to all hearts,

and which none fail to understand? Are there no *mighty works*, no *signs* and *wonders*, as of old, to be wrought now by the Church, which shall be to the world the vouchers of its Divine mission, the heralds of its Divine message, the symbols of its Divine salvation? Yes, verily! in a deep sense we affirm, grace as well as truth ever comes into the world, through the Church, by Jesus Christ. The supernatural energies which first asserted and vindicated the authority and mission of the Lord, and of His Church, in the world, do not exist, are not needed now, save in the realm of the spirit. But the faith and love, awakened as Divine supernatural energies in the spirit of believing men and women, are to accomplish, though by simple and natural ways, mighty works which shall be blessed wonders to men, causing them to marvel, and drawing them by the subtle magnetic forces of sympathy to hear and understand the Divine truth they speak; and which shall be signs—glorious pictures and symbols—re-

vealing the infinite compassion of Christ, and the blessing of His salvation.

Miracles ceased to be required, and therefore ceased to be performed, as soon as the corporate Church grew in vigour, so as to command by her very presence the attention of men, and as soon as the great moral powers of the regenerate life awakened and disciplined in the Church could manifest themselves with due glory by regular and systematic offices of charity, for the healing and purifying of the people. Nevertheless the great fact remained that the life of the Church was manifested in the miraculous love which it inspired in its members, and that this love offering itself, after the example of Christ, in ministry to the good of men, at once gathered souls by a most potent and Divine spell under the gracious influences of the Church, and exhibited to the humblest, weakest, weariest of men, as by a living parable, the great truths of Christ's suffering and redeeming love.

I am led now by this preamble to mark what I conceive to be a great, if not the chief, blemish and weakness in the mission-ministry of all our Protestant, and especially Nonconformist, Churches, and also to look upon what seems to me to be woman's special and appropriate department in the evangelising labours of the Church. Our Churches have presented their truth and faith—that which is the substance of their life—in too abstract a form, too naked a guise. But the Church is not always, as it should be, draped in blissful charities so that it comes to the homes of the people, as a mighty living Christ-like presence, that has a care of them, that lifts up them that are bowed down, that always bends with a bright, heavenly compassion over their misery, and lays a healing, soothing touch on their sickness. There is much and able preaching in the Churches. They trust to the utterance, often emphatic and powerful, of the doctrines of the Gospel; but yet there is somewhat awanting. There

is the *word* of love, but where, we ask, are the mighty *works* of love that shall be as the symbols of their faith, and as wonders drawing the people? Now to restore these evidences of the divinity of the Church, and these needful influences of the Church in evangelising the world, we must restore what I conceive to be almost a lost ministry in the Church—the ministry of Christian women in work which they are specially qualified to do; and which, by reinstating them in their proper place in the Church, affords them an opportunity of taking a distinctive and essential part in its great mission, and thus of fulfilling that duty to Christ and His Church which all loyal, loving souls must feel to be supreme.

I do not affirm that woman's work in the Church, even when we only consider its outward and evangelising labours in the world, should be confined to offices of charity, to which I shall mainly confine my attention in this paper. There are distinct spheres and methods of teaching for which I believe

a Christian woman is pre-eminently adapted, such as in the mothers' meeting, or in the kinds of labour which we have seen carried on so nobly by Miss Marsh among navvies ; by Mrs. Bailey among the brickmakers at the East of London, detailed in her "Ragged Homes, and how to mend them" ; by Mrs. Wightman among drunken men, detailed in her "Annals of the Rescued" ; or by ladies better known to some of us. It will, however, be found that woman's public teaching of Christian truth, to be efficient and conducive to the general good of the Church and its work, should be limited to two spheres ; namely, to gatherings of their own sex, and to classes or meetings of men where the proper personal female influence of holy charity is felt and honoured by each man attending them. I believe that whilst I dare not say exceptional cases may not occur in which the Spirit of the Lord has manifestly called a woman to preach publicly before promiscuous assemblies, they must always be regarded

as exceptional. Many good women ministered to Jesus and for Him when on earth. These, however, were not called out among "the Seventy" or "the Twelve." Phœbe was a deaconess; but no Phœbe was an elder or an evangelist in the Apostolic Church. No! Woman's *special work* in fulfilling the great commission of the Church is defined at once by her distinctive sympathies, and by the urgent need of the Church. For, such services of charity Christian women are prompted to seek, and can render without violating or diminishing the sacred reserve of modesty, which is the secret of their influence.

I am led then briefly to inquire—I. What kinds of work are Christian women specially called to in the Church? and, II. Why should this work be organized and sanctioned by the Church?

I. The fundamental idea of the Church ruling the New Testament descriptions of its membership and mission in the world is, that it is the Body of Christ. Consequently

in each locality where a true Church exists there the Spirit of Christ dwells in an organic and visible form, assuming a bodily presence again to be known of men. The Church is not only to publish the Gospel of salvation, and the righteousness of God, but like Jesus Himself is to be known as a Divine Friend in the locality where it is planted, having a care of the poor, and sick, and homeless, and lost. From it, as the body of Christ, a healing virtue is to be felt to flow, and by remedial healing influences it is to uplift and purify the whole society of men in its neighbourhood.

Now, in such a view of the Church's ministry among men, it is plain there are specific duties which personal service and sisterly, motherly sympathies alone can discharge, and which I think constitute woman's work in the Church. I look more closely at these duties, and divide them into two classes, as they are to be fulfilled in the homes of the people or in connection with institutions founded by the

Church. In the first class or category there is every kind of sympathetic tender help which can be given by loving hearts to those who need our succour, and which may mirror to them the greater love of our Lord in whose name it is done. How often our Lord exalts the honour and reiterates the importance of this service! The cup of cold water to the thirsty, the visit of consolation to the sick—these to the poorest, the least worthy, are great if done in His name: and great is the reward! We inevitably think of help in times of suffering, when we contemplate such Christian ministries as these; and I know of no preaching to the poor like that which steals into their hearts from the grace of women, who, inspired by love of Christ, visit the sick home to make it clean and pure, to assist in nursing, to cool the fevered head, or wet the white burning lips. But that is in fact only one out of countless modes in which this kind of service to Christ may be tendered. There are blind, with whom an hour's kindly chat

or pleasant reading—aged poor, to whom a daughter's visit to tidy their hearth and gladden their dim days—lonely women, to whom a sisterly word saving them from sin—gutter children, to whom a mother's smile—may be a priceless boon, a glimpse of the heavenly love. Wherever and however kindness may be shown, and will be blessed, there let the Church's heart, the heart of its Lord, be shown. I would that in every neighbourhood, instinctively, in trouble and suffering, men looked to the Church, as Christ's very presence among them, for such relief as He can blessedly give. We know how the Romish Church has gained in every land, and is gaining in ours, an immense influence among the poor. And by what means? Not by their preaching. There is little of that with them. By the sedulous, beautiful, gentle charities—the womanly service—of their sisters of charity. Their visits, shedding a tender grace in the homes they enter, do give the poor a vision of the reality of the Divine mercy,

and win them to the faith of a Church that inspires such ministries. Why should not all the redeemed women of every Church—godly women who follow Christ—be sisters of mercy, doing such work for Christ? Why is not the Church itself a sisterhood of mercy? And why is not the entrance of Christian women into the Church to be accepted as their vow to consecrate some time and energy to unselfish, loving service to Christ and mankind?

Let it, however, be distinctly understood that the CHARITY for which the sisterhood of the Church is formed is not alms-giving. Christ had no money to give, and His Church has not much. And it is well. A little money given discreetly, and when its use is immediately inspected and directed by the donors, may be helpful; but abundant, uncontrolled alms-giving is a frightful evil, which breeds a helpless dependence, the indolence and crime of pauperism. The Church may not bribe, as it cannot bless, men with money. Nor is

the world ever to dream, like a Simon Magus, of money as the Church's benison—the good which the Church brings them, and for which it is to beg piteously at its gates. Such a conception, when it exists in a neighbourhood, depraves the whole work of the Church, and destroys the possibility of spiritual good. No; what the Church has to give is what money cannot purchase, and is beyond money's worth—*heart-service*, pity, willing personal help, all the rich ministry of holy love. Silver and gold it may not have; but these, which the Lord freely gives it, it should freely give.

With respect to the second class of duties I have indicated; viz., those that may be fulfilled in connection with institutions founded by the Church, let me say how glad I am that to-day a reactionary and beneficial movement has begun with respect to public charitable institutions. Hitherto these have been stupendous organizations. Orphanages, asylums, hospitals, all of immense size, have

been erected. In consequence, the service—the whole life in these institutions—has been to a large extent mercenary, mechanical, and driven by routine. Individual sympathy, personal interest, cannot exist in them. I confess I do not like to think of one thousand children—all girls or all boys—being reared in one establishment. How drear the monotony of those children's life! No motherhood or fatherhood, no sisterhood, no brotherhood can be there. The children are counted by the head; but what of their poor hearts? Now we have introduced a happier plan—long in operation on the Continent—of forming homes. Orphan homes are raised, in which there shall grow and twine round the young hearts of the children the sweet instincts, and memories, and close attachments of a family life—a home. But these orphan homes we build and support at a distance. Why should not every important Church have its own orphan home in its own neighbourhood, so that the people round about shall see how Christ's

Church gathers the homeless under its wing, and how Christ still says, by its voice, "Suffer little children to come to Me"? I read of one service in Manchester, where a visitor at the Sunday worship was touched to the heart by seeing the *children of the Church*, orphan children, to whom the Church had become a home, gathered together, and by hearing the prayers of the Church for them. Now I plead for such Church orphan homes, where the children are trained as a family; and I plead for them not only for the sake of the children, who can alone be healthily trained in this fashion, and for the sake of the influence of a Church in its neighbourhood, but for the sake of Christian women in the Church. You send guineas to a far-off orphanage, but you cannot send your loving sympathies in the envelope: and to give them to the orphans whom you know, for whom you care, in the orphan home of your Church, which you are happily enabled to visit, is, believe me, to give to the orphan far more than your money, and

is to enrich yourself with a blessing which the Christian women of a Church ought not to lose. I have envied for the ladies of our Churches the god-like joy which I have seen two or three women, a mother and daughters, realize in the care of an orphanage and of bright orphan children committed to them. In the same way I would have home reformatories, like Dr. Wichern's at Hamburg ; cottage asylums, like M. Bost's at Laforce ; even small hospitals, like the village infirmaries so wisely advocated by the late Sir James Simpson of Edinburgh. I would have these, according to its means, conducted economically by a large Church in its own neighbourhood, for the sake of the suffering or vicious there, under its own management. And in these I would have the Christian women of a Church fulfil their womanly and Christ-like ministry of charity, in the name and by the sanction of the Church. Then would the Church, like her Lord, bear the sicknesses of the people, and reveal in un-

mistakable language her profound love for men, and the nature of the redemption she is to accomplish among them, whilst she found for her best members—devout, sympathetic women—spheres for the discipline of their Christian sympathies and the doing of Christian duty.

Now, in conclusion, I state several reasons why these charitable ministries, constituting woman's work in the Church, should be organized and sanctioned by the Church.

1st. That all female members of the Church may be engaged in its service. The scriptural doctrine with respect to the Church is, that each member who joins it is to join in its work, is to have some distinct and recognised part in the accomplishment of the great duty of the Church. But what part or place do Christian women take in the Church? In what Church-work do they engage? We call a few of them to the Sabbath-school; a few of them join in a monthly Dorcas meeting; and that almost sums up their Church labour.

But it may be that Christian women, even devout and earnest women, have not the desire or the aptitude for teaching; and none of them can feel that a quiet, social Dorcas evening, with its sewing and friendly talk, is really a fulfilment of their part of the great mission of Christ's Church. But *all Christian women*, being women and Christian, have the gifts and the calling for such works of charity as I have mentioned. These are no alien tasks to woman; they are her proper delight. For Christ and His Church they constitute just the kind of service which holy women long to undertake. And it is *in the Church* with which they are immediately associated in their own neighbourhood that this service can be most fitly and happily discharged. Some religious women sunder the relationships of home, abandon the sphere of private domestic duties, and enter convents or sisterhoods, to give their life to self-denying labours of love. Life-long vows are always a snare and an evil; and I believe, for the

great majority of women, it is infinitely better that, as daughters, sisters, and mothers, in the presence of friends and neighbours, begirt with the honourable sanctities and duties of their own Christian home, and secured by its benign protection, they should go forth into the world on Christ's special errands of mercy. Then, in this way, all can engage. Few can go far away to join a nursing corps or a sisterhood of charity, but all can join the corps—the sisterhood, comprising every woman of the Church of which they are members, and in which every one redeems and gives some time for womanly, compassionate ministries to the weak, suffering, and dying round about them.

2nd. This work must be organized and sanctioned by the Church, in order that it may be systematically and efficiently carried on, with order and constancy, under the safeguards which such work requires ; in order, likewise, that there may be proper education and training given to the young members of the

Church in the work. It is a mistake to think works of charity can be done anyhow, without preparation or skill. No! there is a tact, a discretion needed in all ; and in some,—for example, nursing, teaching ragged children, etc.,—a certain specific training is almost essential. Hence I should like the elder women, the mothers and widows of our Churches, to go forth, with their younger sisters or daughters, to instruct them in the ways of the Lord's work. We don't usually want scientific training, but the training which experience and Christian wisdom impart ; and that can be given, and ought to be given, in the Church.

3rdly, and chiefly, this work ought to be organized and sanctioned by the Church, in order that the Church may speak forth to men, and reveal itself with the united strength, the grand collective voice—of all its members. Individuals are broken up through society. Their influence is personal, and is recognised as such. Christ

is not clearly recognised and honoured as working in them and by them. But in the Church, where work is done openly and constantly in Christ's name, Christ receives the glory due to Him.

There is a vast amount of Christian charity, I know, which is done to-day by individuals, by Christian women. Our infirmaries and our benevolent institutions are mainly supported—private charities innumerable are daily wrought—by men and women with whom the inspiring motive of their benevolence is the love for men which Christ has quickened. But this motive is not realized and felt by the world as it would be—Christ is not seen in these self-sacrificing ministries as He would be—if they were done in connection with the Church, and professedly, therefore, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

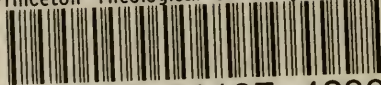
4thly. I desire that this work be organized and sanctioned by the Church, in order that Christian women in all they undertake may

feel they have the support of the great brotherhood of Christ in their work—that they have an authority higher than their own—that they are called, commissioned, sustained by the Church, and that they act in its name for the fulfilment of its mission and for the glory of its Lord. Let the sympathies and prayers of the Church surround to shield and arm every holy woman doing its work for Christ in the quenching of this world's woes.

And lastly, I desire it for the Church's own sake, that the philanthropic work undertaken by its own members by its authority, may be ceaselessly before its attention, may be made the subject of deliberation, of counsel, and of prayer in its meetings; and that the reports made to it by those whom it sends forth to fulfil this service of humanity may engrave this sacred truth in lines of heavenly fire upon its heart—that within the Church is the Tree of Life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations—that the Church has

been founded upon earth as an institution that is to labour unwearingly for the uplifting, reform, and sanctifying of all the societies of men, for the removal of all evil, and the universal redemption of mankind from the original curse of sin with which they are grievously wounded, even unto death.

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